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THE LAW OF ADOPTION.

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit."—*Jesus Christ.*

AMONGST the many systems of religion bearing the name of christianity, it is natural to suppose that there must have been some wide deviations from that order of things established by the immediate followers of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that while many innovations have been introduced upon the simplicity of the gospel, many things of the utmost importance have been forgotten, or the import of them overlooked. In illustration of this subject, we hesitate not to state, and without fear of any successful contradiction founded on the word of God, that the law of adoption, which we have placed at the head of this article, is one that has been overlooked and forgotten, though of infinite importance.

The law of adoption amongst men, is a law intended to supply the lack of birthright—the defect of having no natural and legitimate claim of heirship; so also is it in connexion with the kingdom of God. Let us inquire what is the position in which the human family stands in relation to God; is it that of children beloved, approved, and whose claims to the heritage and glory of their parent none can dispute? By no means. It will be almost generally allowed that our race have become aliens from God, that they have lost all claim to his friendship and favour, and that they stand in a state of condemnation before him; and that unless he had, in his infinite mercy, devised a plan of redemption by which

they might escape from their perilous condition, they must inevitably perish.

Let us now come, in sincerity of soul and all honesty of heart, and inquire what has God done that we might escape from the consequences of transgression, and be restored to his favour, and be accepted of him. We read, then, in the eighth chapter of Paul's letter to the Roman Saints, that "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:" and that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which he hath given us, hath made us free from the law of sin and death.

Let us, then, now endeavour to examine into the nature of that law by which we are emancipated from the position of condemnation which we naturally occupied. It is written in the first chapter of John's gospel, that he (Christ) came unto his own, but his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Here, then, we understand clearly the general object for which Christ was manifested, which was to take away our sins, by giving to those that believed on him the privilege of becoming Sons of God. And this was to be effected by a birth after the will of God, and not after

anything connected with the will of man or the flesh; for as we read in the quotation we have given at the head of this article, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh."

But to further illustrate the nature of the law of adoption, let us examine the conduct of him who hath become the *first born* among many brethren, and who hath been made an example for us, that we should follow his steps. We then find, in the third chapter of Matthew's gospel, that before the Saviour went forth on his public ministry, he repaired unto him that had been appointed his forerunner, in order that he might be baptized of him in Jordan; but with the modesty of true humility and conscious unworthiness, he hesitates at first to minister, though he knew that he was appointed the porter to open the door to the shepherd of the sheep. But on the Saviour's expostulation with him, he suffered him; and let us mark the result: And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here, then, in the ratification of the ordinance of baptism, or the great law of adoption, instituted in order that men might enjoy the privilege of becoming Sons of God, was the declaration made of the sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the Saviour hath declared it necessary that we should also be *born* of water and of the spirit before we can enter into the kingdom of God.

How beautiful and fitting are the statements of divine truth. The seed of which we are said to be born, is the incorruptible seed, the word of God; thus the honest in heart hear the declaration of the gospel of peace—by its reception are begotten new creatures—quicken into new life, and led to cry out as of old, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" When the dictate of the spirit prompting the answer, replieth, "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Here, then, by being buried with Christ by baptism into his death, and that, too, in an element destructive of life were we to continue

therein, we are raised therefrom to walk in newness of life, in consequence of the remission of our sins, and the reception of that spirit which is promised unto us, even the gift of the Holy Ghost, fulfilling what is written, that there are three that bear witness on earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood.

Here, then, is a law of the kingdom of God, of infinite importance to the human family, placed at the very threshold of his house, and declared necessary for salvation by the Saviour himself in giving his commission to his disciples, when he stated that he that believed and was baptized should be saved, but he that would not believe should be condemned; for he would have no claim on the privilege to become a son of God, by being baptized in the name of Jesus for remission of his sins.

Then it necessarily follows from the consideration of this subject, that there is a time as well as a privilege of changing our position before God, and of entering from a state of alienation into an immediate relationship to himself, having a legal claim, by the laws of heaven, on the privileges of sonship, as an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. Shall we any longer wonder then at the declaration of the prophet Isaiah in his twenty-fourth chapter, that because mankind have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant, that the curse shall devour the earth and the inhabitants thereof shall be burned up and few men be left; no, we cannot wonder, we cannot be surprised when we reflect on the infinite benevolence of God manifested towards the human family, and consider the high destiny for which God has designed them, even to receive of his own glory, to become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; and yet man has perverted his laws, changed his ordinance, and the covenant by which he was to be restored to divine favour, he has spurned and broken.

But again, before we can have a claim upon the possession of the spirit of God, we must most assuredly have changed our position; we must no longer stand in the character of aliens, and enemies; but on the contrary, we must have recognized him whom the Father hath appointed a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel and remission of

sins; we must have humbled ourselves unto the obedience of his law of adoption before we can claim the spirit of adoption, whereby we can legally call God our Father, and approach him with the confidence of sons and children of the highest.

But, by way of improvement to this subject, what shall we say unto those who know the Lord's will and do it not? truly, that they are in the flesh and cannot please God; that they have not been born of water and of the spirit, and therefore in their present circumstances they cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Better for them had the depths of an African wilderness witnessed their birth after the flesh, where their career might have commenced and ended without a knowledge of the laws of heaven, than that, knowing them, they should

continue disobedient and sin against the light of truth, and the strivings of that spirit which hath long pleaded with them to lead them to the obedience of faith; and we would faithfully warn them to consider well their position, that now is their day of salvation, and possibly, ere long it may have set in a night of darkness and despair. The present time is the day of mercy unto man, the offers of salvation are borne, or shall be as on the wings of the wind unto all people before the end come; but the end shall come, and that speedily. Let us then listen to the hail of salvation, press forward into the fold of the Redeemer, that when his judgments shall be poured out upon the nations, we may be sheltered from harm until his fury be past. Amen.

THE EDITOR.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN W— C— AND ORSON SPENCER.

Extracted from the Times and Seasons.

W— C—'S LETTER.

Boston, October 21, 1842.

My Dear Sir,—On the confidence of an old acquaintance and kindly intercourse, I have long wished to address a friendly line to you; for I am sure you have not forgotten the pleasant, though brief, interviews which we enjoyed at Middlefield. Since I saw you there, a great change has taken place, as I have been led to believe, in your religious views, and a corresponding one in your relations and circumstances; still I trust that you have not forgotten the claims of friendship and acquaintance. I need not tell you how much I became interested in your family, so young and so full of promise, nor of the strong confidence which I reposed in your piety and conscientious regard for the will of God. I would not allow myself to believe that you would profess what you did not sincerely believe, nor that you would believe without good reasons; still the change in your views excited in me no little surprise. I have therefore been desirous to receive from yourself an account of your views, and the reasons of your change. I am also desirous to obtain from one in whom I can confide—one who is acquainted with the facts—and one who is not prejudiced against it at the outset, some account of the faith which you have embraced; of the personal character, doctrines, claims, and influence of him who is called the leader—I mean Joseph Smith. Does he claim to be inspired? Is he a man of prayer? a man of pure life? a man of peace? Where is he now? Does he appear at the head of his troops as a military commander? What is the nature of the worship among you, and wherein does it differ from that of religious people with whom you have been acquainted elsewhere? How many inhabitants has the city of Nauvoo? What is their condition, occupations, and general character? What are the dimensions of the Temple, now in course of erection? Do the Mormons suffer much persecution? If so, from whom? Are the children instructed in learning and religion? It would give me great pleasure to learn also, how you are employed? whether your family are with you; and also your present views of truth and duty, and in what respects they differ from the views which you formerly entertained.

Excuse the number and minuteness of these inquiries. I take an interest in all that affects the welfare of my fellow men, and especially in what is so important as

their religious views and hopes. I am aware that the people, and the views which you have adopted as your own, are peculiarly liable to misrepresentation; but from you I may expect something more impartial. Now, if you do not find the task too great a tax upon your time, I should be much gratified in receiving as full and as speedy an answer to the queries above proposed, with any other information in your possession, as may be convenient to yourself.

It may be gratifying to you to learn that a powerful revival of religion has been enjoyed in Middlefield, within a few weeks past, an account of which, Mr. Bestor, the present pastor, has sent to me for publication in *The Christian Watchman*, a copy of which I send you. I visited the town in the summer, and found your old friends well. I also attended a minister's meeting at brother Bestor's and enjoyed a very pleasant interview. Several of the brethren spoke of you in terms of kindness.—My best wishes attend you. Present my regards to Mrs. Spencer, and believe me very truly yours,

W— C—.

P. S.—You will understand that I ask for information for my private benefit and satisfaction. I do not ask for anything to be published unless you see fit to give it for that purpose: I wish you to write as to an old friend.

ORSON SPENCER'S LETTER.

Nauvoo, November 17, 1842.

My Dear Sir,—I received yours of the 21st ultimo about a week since, but many engagements have prevented a more early reply. Your enquiries were interesting and important, and I only regret that I have not more time and room to answer them as their importance and minuteness demand. I am not at all surprised that my old friends should wonder at my change of views. Even to this day, it is marvellous in my own eyes how I should be separated from my brethren to this (Mormon) faith. I greatly desire to see my Baptist brethren face to face, that I may tell them all things pertaining to my views and this work. But at present the care of my wife and six children, with the labours of a civil office, forbids this privilege. A sheet of paper is a poor conductor of a marvellous and controverted system of theology. But receive this sheet as containing only some broken hints upon which I hope to amplify in some better manner hereafter. You have expressed confidence in my former conscientious regard for the will of God. I thank you for this, because the virtues of many good men have been disallowed upon some supposed forfeiture of public esteem. I thank God that you and many of the churches where I once laboured are more liberal.

You, more than common men, know that it is in accordance with all past history that men's true characters suffer imprisonment, scourging and death, as soon as they become innovators or seceders from long-established and venerated systems. Many have suffered martyrdom for literary and also religious improvements, to whom after ages have done better justice. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted, and slain

them which told before of the coming of the Just One?" It was the misfortune of many of the former prophets that they were raised up at a period of the world, when apostasy and corruption rendered their efforts indispensable, although such efforts proved unacceptable to those who were in fault.—Ancient prophets, you know, did not merely reiterate what their predecessors had taught, but spoke hidden wisdom, even things that had been kept secret for many generations; because the spirit by which they were moved had knowledge of all truth, and could disclose and reveal as it seemed wisdom in God. The spirits that were disobedient while once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, doubtless despised the prophet that taught a universal deluge.

But Noah had a special revelation of a deluge, although the religious people of his day counted him an enthusiast. The revelation given to Moses to gather an oppressed people to a particular place, was equally one side of and out of the usual course of former revelations. John came to the literal followers of Abraham and Moses; but he escaped not persecution and death, because he breathed an uncharitable and exclusive spirit towards the existing sects of the day. Still he was a revelator and seer approved of God.

And is it a thing incredible with you, brother, that before the great sabbatic era, world's rest, or millennium, God should raise up a prophet to prepare the people for that event, and the second coming of Jesus Christ? Would it be disagreeable to those who love the unity of Saints, or improbable or unscriptural to expect such a prophet to be possessed with the key of knowledge, or

endowed like Peter with the *stone* of revelation. If the many hundred religious sects of this age should hereafter harmonize into one faith and brotherhood without the aid of special revelations, it would constitute an unparalleled phenomenon. Should they become a bride fit to receive Jesus Christ at his coming; it could not be according to Paul's gospel. For six thousand years, apostles and prophets have constituted an essential part of the spiritual edifice in which God dwells. Paul says it is by them the church is perfected and brought to unity of faith.

I know that you and I have been taught from our childhood, that the church can be perfected without prophets; but where, I ask, is the first scripture to support this view.

As you kindly say, I have always been accustomed to offer a reason for my faith. But be assured I was confounded and made dumb when asked why I taught another gospel than what Paul did—why I taught that revelation was ended when Paul did not—or why I taught that prophets were not needed when no inspired teacher ever taught such a doctrine. Error may become venerable by age, and respectable from the number of its votaries, but neither age nor popularity can ever make it truth.

You give me credit for a conscientious regard for the will of God. It was this that gave me the victory where many others, I fear, are vanquished. The spirit of God wrought mightily in me, commending the ancient gospel to my conscience. I contemplated it with peaceful serenity and joy in believing. Visions and dreams began to illuminate occasionally my slumbering moments; but when I allowed my selfish propensities to speak, I cursed Mormonism in my heart, and regretted being in possession of as much light and knowledge as had flowed into my mind from that source. When I preached or conversed according to my best convictions, peace reigned in my heart and truth enlarged my understanding: conviction and reverence for the truth at such times seemed to reign in the hearts of those that heard me; at times, however, some were ready to gnash their teeth, for the truth that they would not receive and could not resist.

I counted the cost to myself and family of embracing such views, until I could read it like the child his alphabet, either upward or downward. The expense I viewed through unavoidable tears both in public and private, by night and by day. I said, however, the Lord He is God, I can, I will embrace the truth.

When I considered the weakness of the human mind and its liability to be deceived,

I re-examined and held converse with the most able opposers to Mormonism, in a meek and teachable spirit. But the ease with which many wearing a high profession of piety, turned aside the force of palpable truth, or leaned on tradition for inextricable difficulties that they could not solve into harmony with their professions, was very far from dissuading me from my new views. What could I do? Truth had taken possession of my mind; plain, simple, bible truth. It might be asked if I could not expel it from my door: yes, I *could* do it; but how would that harmonize with a sincere profession to preach and practice the truth, by way of example to others? It was a crisis I never shall—I never can forget. I remember it as an exodus from parents, kindred, denomination, and temporal support. Has any one ever passed such a crisis, they will say, at least, be careful of brother Spencer's character and feelings.

Little as I supposed that I cared about popularity, competence, or the fellowship of those who were sincerely in error; when I came to be stretched upon the altar of sacrifice, and the unheathed blade that was to excise from all these hung over me with perpendicular exactness. Then, then, brother, I cried unto the Lord to strengthen me to pass through the scene with his approbation.

While I was enquiring to know what the Lord would have me to do, many brethren of different denominations warned and exhorted me faithfully; but their warnings consisted very much in a lively exhibition of evils to be endured if I persisted, or in other words, they appealed to my selfish nature; but I knew too well that truth should not be abandoned through the force of such appeals, however eloquently urged. Some with whom I conversed gave glowing descriptions of the obnoxious character of Joseph Smith, and of the contradictory and unscriptural jargon of the Book of Mormon, but it was their misfortune usually to be deplorably ignorant of the true character of either.

Of the truth of this statement many instances might be furnished, if the limits of my sheet would allow. My own solicitude to know the character of Mr. Smith, in order to judge of the doctrines propagated by him, was not so great as that of some others. My aversion to the worship of man is both educational and religious; but I said boldly concerning Mr. Smith, that whoever had arranged and harmonized such a system of irresistible truth has borne good fruit. Some suggested that it would be wisdom to make a personal acquaintance with Mr. Smith previous to embracing his doctrines; but to me the obligation to receive the truths of

heaven seemed absolute, whatever might be the character of Mr. Smith.

I read diligently the Book of Mormon from beginning to end, in close connection with the comments of Origen Bachelor, Laroy Sunderland, and Dr. Hulburt, together with newspapers and some private letters obtained from the surviving friends of Mr. Spaulding, the supposed author of that Book. I arose from its perusal with a strong conviction on my mind that its pages were graced with the pen of inspiration. I was surprised that so little fault could be found with a book of such magnitude, treating as it did of such diversified subjects, through a period of so many generations. It appeared to me that no enemy to truth or godliness would ever take the least interest in publishing the contents of such a book; such appeared to me to be its godly bearing, sound morality and harmony with ancient scriptures, that the enemy of all righteousness might as well proclaim the dissolution of his own kingdom, as to spread the contents of such a volume among men; and from that time to this, every effort made by its enemies to demolish, has only shown how invincible a fortress defends it. If no greater breach can be made upon it than has hitherto been made by those who have attacked it with the greatest animosity and diligence, its overthrow may be considered a forlorn hope. On this subject I only ask the friends of pure religion to read the Book of Mormon with the same unprejudiced, prayerful, and teachable spirit that they would recommend unbelievers in the ancient scriptures to read those sacred records. I have not spoken of the external evidence of the truth of the Book of Mormon, which is now worthy of much consideration; but the internal evidence, I think, will satisfy every honest mind.

As you enquire after the reasons that operated to change my mind to the present faith, I only remark that "Stevens's Travels" had some influence, as an external evidence of the truth of the Book of Mormon.

My present view, after which you also enquire, is, that the evidence both internal and external have been multiplied—it may have caused surprise and wonder to many of my respected and distinguished friends in New England, how I could ever renounce a respectable standing in the churches and in the ministry to adhere to a people so odious in every one's mouth, and so revolting to every one's natural liking. The answer in part is this:—As soon as I discovered an identity in the doctrines of the Latter-day Saints and the Ancient Saints, I enquired whether the treatment bestowed upon each was also similar. I immediately began to dig deep to find the foundation and corner-stone

of the true church, I looked at the demeanor and character of those who surrounded the Ancient Saints. The result of my observation seemed to be, that even Jesus Christ had many objectionable points of character to those who observed him; those who were reputedly most conversant with Abraham, Moses, and other prophets of the Lord, pronounce him unfit for the respect and confidence of a pious community; and why did such men find so many objectionable points in the character and conduct of Jesus Christ? For substantially the same reasons that men of high intelligence and devotion find fault with Joseph Smith and his doctrines. Those who bore down with heavy opposition to Jesus Christ were honourable men, whose genealogy took in the worthiest ancestry; they were the orthodox expositors of revealed truth. Those who now oppose Joseph Smith, (a person ordained and sent forth by Jesus Christ) occupy the same high and respectable standing, and manifest a similar bearing towards the reputed impostor of the present day. The ancient worthies were the repositories of learning, and so are the modern worthies. The ancients taught many things according to truth and godliness, and verily believed they were substantially right in faith and practice; this is also true of modern religious teachers.

But in reply to my own question, why the ancient religionists opposed Jesus Christ, I answer, in the first place, they mistook his true character and conduct. In the second place, they were palpably ignorant of the wisdom and godliness of many things in the character and conduct of Jesus Christ; they considered that there was absolutely a wide difference in the views and conduct of Jesus Christ and themselves. The same is true of many distinguished opposers to Joseph Smith; they consider that there is an irreconcilable difference between themselves and Mr. Smith; and Mr. Smith of course is in the wrong, and they are in the right. Now let us consider first, wherein the ancients mistook the character of Jesus Christ, and modern opposers to Mr. Smith do the same of him. The true character of Jesus Christ was very imperfectly known to those who opposed him in his own time. Many impostors that had preceded, had guarded the public mind against a repetition of further abuse. He was eyed with dark suspicion wherever he went; it may well be supposed that sage precaution against him was vehemently urged, lest through his great subtlety he might mislead even some that were respectable.

And what could he do to disabuse the public mind—prejudice and calumny outran and prepared a thorny reception for him in all places; and so thick and dark was the

fog and cloud of misapprehension and falsehood that followed him, that dark suspicions and foul inferences would obtrude upon the minds even of the honest, to weaken their convictions in his behalf, and shake their conclusions; the tale of calumny never lost in sharpness and effect by time or distance. Those who had not the privilege of a personal acquaintance with Jesus, might be supposed to have no interests in favouring a personage, whose pretensions, if countenanced, would disturb their quietude, and impugn their motives, and threaten the prosperity of a system that they supposed as old as the days of Abraham, and teachings as orthodox as the sayings of Moses. But whatever was said or done by Jesus that could possibly be construed by prejudiced minds to his disadvantage, these things were heeded with readiness, and published in the social circle, and riveted by the butt of ridicule upon every mind; and those who loved a laugh at the expense of the innocent, could furnish stock for the purpose by retailing tales about the supposed impostor, that had their origin in misapprehension and falsehood. But they were well received and cheered by those who affected grave reverence for the Supreme Deity, while they could trample with scorn (unconsciously) upon the *brightness of his glory in the person of his Son*.

Now let me ask if the character and conduct of Mr. Smith is not equally misunderstood by modern religionists. Mr. Smith only claims to be a prophet raised up to usher in the last dispensation; while Jesus Christ was more obnoxious in proportion to the superior magnitude of his claims as the Son God. How difficult it is for persons in the present age to form a correct estimate of the true character and views of Mr. Smith. The public mind is always forestalled concerning him. It is taken to be sound orthodoxy that there is no more need of prophets or revelations; the canon of scripture is full; consequently the man that will claim to be a prophet or revelator and seer, must be a base impostor and knave. With this educational prejudice, sanctioned by the best men for a thousand years past, and riveted by solemn vows to abide in orthodoxy, they see as though they saw not, and hear as though they heard not. If excellent things are taught by Mr. Smith, it is considered by prejudiced minds as a good bait employed to cover a well-barbed hook; by many he is considered more detestable and dangerous, because say they, if he did not mix so much good with his system, he would not be so dangerous and so likely to deceive. Again, can the people of this country obtain a correct knowledge of the prophet through the religious prints. I ap-

prehend they never will. Those who control the religious prints conceive they know in the premises, that God has not raised up such a prophet, therefore they will not tarnish the columns of their periodicals by publishing anything favourable to him. While they feel bound to withhold whatever might commend the prophet to the favourable regards of impartial men, they feel solemnly constrained to advertise the public of all rising heresies. Thus while our supposed heresies are published from very questionable data, our real virtues are buried in oblivion. We do not murmur; if Jesus the master could not be known in his true character; but said with mingled pity and forgiveness, they know not what they do; we cannot expect better treatment from those who know but little of us while they say much to disadvantage. Paul did the ancient saints much harm, and wasted them greatly, being ignorant of their true character and unbelieving as to their doctrines. It is certain that Latter-day Saints have received much harm from those who are ignorant of their character and unbelieving as to their doctrines. Religious editors generally know very little of us, except what they have learnt from our enemies. Jesus Christ was entirely stripped of his reputation by his enemies, and was put to death by learned, yet ignorant zealots, who were too self-wise to be taught by one whom they knew to be an impostor in the start; but those men were mistaken in the character of our Lord, and so are our enemies mistaken in the character and views of the modern prophet. My own personal observation teaches that it is a very difficult matter to instil into the minds of sectarian churches a true knowledge of the faith and practice of Latter-day Saints. Though one should go among them that was once highly esteemed by them, they are alarmed at his approach, and his virtues are concerned to render him more deserving of a repulse. His influence, say they, may be formidable; we must not bid him God speed, consequently he is not asked to pray in the family or public meeting. If he can, by great effort, get an opportunity to preach, it is not thought advisable for any body to go and hear him, lest they should be led away by his errors. Thus, you see, brother, how difficult in former and latter days to bring the true faith to the knowledge of men through prejudice. They have prejudged a matter of which they are almost entirely ignorant. This same notion of treating new matters has veiled the sun in darkness, and hung the prince of life in agonies. How long shall this treatment of the saints be persisted in? How long shall prophets be persecuted and slain without being fully

known, and the servants of God be excluded from an impartial hearing, when they seek to publish good tidings—even salvation to the inhabitants of the earth? Now let me ask my former friends in the eastern churches, with whom I once held sweet intercourse, how it is possible for the Latter-day Saints to introduce their views among the sectarian churches and the world, with any more favourable reception than the ancient saints had in introducing theirs. Prejudice and persecution faced them down always, and so it is in these days. It is certainly a mistaken idea to suppose that people are much better now than they were anciently, when the true gospel was misunderstood, and its promoters sincerely accounted disturbers and heretics worthy of exemplary punishment. But say the wise and great men among the sectarian churches, "we do understand the true gospel, and have already embraced it, and it is only error and heresy we oppose, and the weight of our contempt and ridicule is hurled at impostors and knaves, who palm off gross deceptions upon the public, and lead captive ignorant zealots by pretended revelations and spurious miracles. But do they not know that substantially the same charge was brought against Jesus Christ and the primitive disciples. But let it be proved that we are what our enemies call us; let us file our respective pleas and come to a speedy and impartial trial; to this our opposers will not consent; they intend to employ all the advantage of education and prejudice to exclude us from a hearing, so did the opposers of the ancient saints. But I solemnly ask whether it has ever been necessary in any moral enterprise, for those who have the truth on their side, especially gospel truth, to defend that truth by foreclosing discussion, and shunning public investigation, and then carry on their depredations by the use of such small arms as ridicules and preconceived objections that need only to be brought to the light to be dissipated like fog in the meridian sun.

Do temperance lecturers, bible and education agents, and other moral reformers find it necessary to carry on their enterprises by such means? Do they seek to avoid an open and frank discussion with the intemperate portions of the community? Do they avoid a manly investigation because the intemperate portions of the community combine in their life and conduct beastly sottishness, unprovoked abuse to wives and children, a prodigal waste of competence and ample fortunes, and the overthrow of intellect and the dissolution of all moral ties? No, by no means! They seek the broad day light of public discussion, because they know the truth and power of that side of the cause which they have espoused.—

They know that intemperance cannot survive the impartial observation of good men. All we ask is that the word of God may have free course. We wish that it may come distinctly to the knowledge of men, that they may sit in impartial judgment upon it. By word of God we mean not only what was revealed for the ancients specially, but also what is now revealed for this generation. Oh! says the objector, he wants to have the word of Joseph Smith have a free circulation, and this we oppose because it is blasphemous and preposterous. Yes, we want the word of God by Joseph Smith, to be known and read of all men, because it is written not with ink, but the spirit of the living God. What were Peter, Elijah, or Moses but earthen vessels by whom God communicated his own knowledge, power, and glory? Does not the word by Joseph commend itself to every man's conscience where it is heard with due candour? I have never seen that person who had read the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants entirely through, with an earnest desire to know whether it was of God or not, who could raise any worthy objection against them. A few isolated portions of these books are often selected out and made to speak some other besides their true meaning, and thereby a dislike for these books is created, consequently some refuse to read them at all, while some others read only to confirm their prepossessions and prejudices. And superficial enquirers hear with credulity that such a minister, editor, or professor of some college has published an expose or refutation of Mormonism that will inflict a fatal wound upon this glaring and blasphemous heresy.

Now it is well known that the novelties of this age are so many and so various, that no man has time to examine into them all; and many consider that a hint from a pious editor or distinguished reviewer against Mormonism, is sufficient apology for them not to examine it. Now, under these considerations it is easy to divine that the doctrines of the Latter-day Saints must travel through obstacles and difficulties of the greatest magnitude. And I am ready, dear brother, to mourn over the prospect, because many bad men and some good men will fight against the faith not knowing what they do. My bosom heaves with the deeper concern, because I know this to be the true gospel, and that it will prevail, even though the foe should be so great and powerful as the Lord's enemies were in the days of Noah. Pardon my assurance when I say that those beautiful systems, called benevolent operations, must come to nought; not because they are not honestly designed for some good effect, but because they are a mixture of human

device with the wisdom of God, or the gospel perverted. I know, too, that these beautiful systems, together with the various orders of sectarianism, cannot well be vanquished without a desperate struggle ensues. Sectarism is old and venerable, and having undergone many costly repairs without much substantial improvement, it can never be demolished without violent resistance. There is an air of sacredness around it that will stimulate its votaries insensibly; and when they are assailed by the strong hand of bible truth, rather than to see their fortress taken by the illiterate followers of the despised prophet, will summon to their aid the worst passions, and push matters to the greatest extremities. These remarks are amply supported by the history of the past, both in respect to Former and Latter-day Saints. See the ancient Jew of our Lord's day—his piety was scrupulously exact—he knew the worth of his religion by the pains and expense it had cost him. Every thing had with great trouble been fashioned into a system of sacredness. They had been striving hard for a beautiful system of perfection that would commend them to God, and mourned that any of Abraham's children should teach that there was no resurrection, &c., and not harmonize with them in bearing heavy burdens in order to save men's souls; and when an obscure personage sprung up, and broke over their rules of piety, and mingled with the profane without ceremonious washing, and was seen to drink wine probably, and eat with the boisterous and odious classes, without pretending to wash away the contagion that accrued, and to travel on the sabbath day, and to pluck ears of corn without any signs of confession, and to heap harsh soundings and heavy anathemas upon the most intelligent and devoted men of the age, and claim to be a prophet, while he ignorantly conversed with an adulterous woman. All this, the scrupulous Jew could not, and would not, bear; and his anger was heightened to mad-

ness when he found that many adhered to the new teacher, and occasionally a person of wealth and standing was won over to the impostor by his artifice and jugglery. And as the influence of this odious personage spread especially among the common people who had not sufficient sagacity to detect his fraudulent tricks; and as the orthodoxy and piety of the children of Abraham and Moses began to be suspected, and even preached in synagogues that were too holy for such pollution, the devoted children of Abraham became exasperated; if we let him alone, say they, all men will believe on him; fearful to use the rod and power, by reason of the Romans, to the utmost rigour, they at first sought to render him obnoxious to Caesar; but as measures successively failed, they thirsted for his blood until their pious malice was glutted in his expiring agonies. Then thought they, every body may know that his miracles are all a humbug because he could not save himself. Now, brother, I ask you to stop and make a full pause by way of exertion. How do devoted sectarians entertain the Latter-day Saints? Not surely by a candid exposure of our errors, coupled with a patient effort to reclaim us. "By no means," said a highly respectable deaconess, "brother Spencer, I would rather have heard that you were dead." She knew in the general that I had embraced Mormonism. But of the true character of Mormonism she was grossly ignorant; and she was actually driven into fits when she found I defended the doctrines of Latter-day Saints. Look at the conduct of devoted sectarians towards the Latter-day Saints, and mark the resemblance to that of ancient Jews to former saints. The same proscriptive spirit reigns now as then. The same spirit that dictated expulsion from the synagogue then, now closes the doors of meeting houses against us. The same spirit that closed men's ears against the burning eloquence of Stephen then, counsels men not to hear or go nigh Mormon preachers now.

To be concluded in the next number.

A SINGULAR CASE OF HERESY.

From the Times and Seasons.

We had the following handed to us for publication, and had we not been somewhat conversant with the folly of sectarianism, we could not have believed that a body of church officers could have been found in the United States, so egregiously ignorant as those who formed

the tribunal at which the following excommunicating sentence was passed.

Resolved—That William Seichrist be excluded from the fellowship of this church for embracing and maintaining a heresy, to wit:—Doctrines peculiar to a late sect called Mormons or Latter-day Saints, that miracles

can be wrought through the instrumentality of Faith, that special Revelations from God are now given to men, and that godly men are now endowed with the gift of prophecy, such as to foretell future events.

WILLIAM BENSON, Chief Clerk.

Sept. 28, 1842.

I do certify the above resolution to be a true copy of the original, excluding my son from the fellowship of the first regular Baptist Church of the city of Alleghany, Alleghany county, Pennsylvania.

Moderator, DEACON JOHN BECK,
Chief Clerk, DEACON W. BENSON.

C. SEICHRIST.

The crime with which Mr. Seichrist stands charged is that of heresy; and that not only of believing it, but "embracing and maintaining" it. Now as heresies are at all times to be dreaded, it is of the most paramount importance that we be enabled to detect heretical doctrines and abide by the truth; for Paul prophesies that "men will bring in damnable heresies," therefore if heresies are damnable in their nature, those that embrace and maintain them must be damned, and consequently are not fit members of a christian community.—But now for the heresies referred to:

Heresy first :—Doctrines peculiar to a late sect called Mormons, or Latter-day Saints, that miracles can be wrought through the instrumentality of faith.

I always thought that every school-boy who had read his bible believed this thing; for the scripture says, "all things are possible to them that believe." By faith Moses divided the Red Sea—by faith Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and the moon in the valley of Adjelon; these men must have been strongly tinctured with doctrines peculiar to the "Latter-day Saints;" and Paul must have been a notorious heretic, for he says, that "by faith they wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, waxed valiant in fight, put to flight the armies of the aliens, out of weakness were made strong;" that "by faith they subdued kingdoms," and "through faith women received their dead to life," and others were tortured not accepting deliverance;" that Enoch was translated by it, and that "through faith the worlds were framed;" he further states, that "without faith it is impossible to please God." These characters must all of them have been notorious heretics, for they all be-

lieved that miracles could be wrought by faith; and it was very fortunate for them, that they were not members of the first regular Baptist Church of the city of Alleghany, or they would have been expelled for holding doctrines peculiar to the Latter-day Saints; but what made their case worse was, that, they not only entertained these doctrines while alive, but they "all died in faith;" therefore we may reasonably expect that there will be a goodly number of them in the eternal world, that hold the same doctrines as the Latter-day Saints.

Heresy second :—That special revelations from God are now given to men.

Noah had it revealed to him that God was going to destroy the world by water, and that he should build an ark. Moses had it revealed unto him, that he should lead the children of Israel from Egypt to Palestine. Abraham and Lot had it revealed to them that Sodom and Gomorrah should be destroyed. It was revealed to Jonah that Ninevah should be destroyed, except they repented—to Jeremiah that Babylon should be overthrown—to Isaiah that Jesus should appear, be rejected and crucified. It was revealed to our Saviour that Jerusalem should be destroyed, and that there should not be left one stone upon another that should not be thrown down. These were all special revelations, and they, of course, did not belong to the first regular Baptist Church or they would have been expelled by them. Agabus, Peter, Paul, John, all of them had special revelations, and, of course, did not belong to the Baptist Church; in fact, the bible is chiefly made up of revelation, and so far as that testimony goes, they are as old as Adam, as modern as John, and as scriptural as the Old and New Testaments.

But this may not be the difficulty; perhaps they might not consider it heresy for the people in those days to have special revelations, that God has changed, and that what was orthodox then is now heresy; the board may have taken this into consideration, or they may not—they have not informed us. They have stated that they consider it heresy to believe that "special revelations" from God are now given to men. If the scripture is any testimony of what should be given to men, we can adduce it:—

Jeremiah, in speaking concerning the last days, says, "I will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth." Isaiah says, upon the same subject, "I will restore their judges as at the first, and their counsellors as at the beginning," and if this is ever done, there will, unquestionably, be some *special revelations from God*; for if any one like Moses or Aaron comes, they will have special revelations; but it will be woe to the people that have them, or believe in them, if they belong to the first regular Baptist Church, for they would immediately bring them before their tribunal, and excommunicate them for heresy.

Heresy third:—Believing that Godly men are now endowed with the gift of prophecy.

Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Habbakuk, Malachi, and a host of others in the Old Testament, prophesied and foretold future events; and Jesus, Peter, Paul, John, James, Jude, Phillip's daughters, and almost the whole churches in the New Testament, prophesied and *foretold future events*; and they all must certainly have been charged with the crime of heresy, if God has not changed, according to the opinions of the Baptist Church, which we are told is truly orthodox.—And Joel, in speaking concerning our day, says, it shall come to pass in the last days saith God, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions, and upon my servants, and handmaids, I will pour out of my spirit, and they shall prophesy."—Now unless it can be made to appear that we have taken a tremendous leap from the last days to the first days, we shall have men like Joseph, dreaming dreams; men like Isaiah and Daniel, seeing visions; men like Jeremiah, Hosea, Peter, Paul, John and James, foretelling future events;

in fact, the spirit of the Lord will rest upon his servants and handmaids, and they will prophesy; and there will be such a turning over among the regular Baptists as was never heard of before.

It must have been the case, that the antediluvians belonged to the first regular Baptist Church; for they were unbelievers in prophecy and in foretelling future events; the inhabitants of Sodom, and Gomorrah, must have belonged to the same order; for they did not believe in these things; the Pharisees also, for they cast out Jesus for being a prophet; and when he was blindfolded, smote him, and tauntingly said, "prophesy who smote thee:" in fact, the *regular Baptist Church* is spoken of by Paul; he says that "the time will come when men will not endure *sound doctrine*; but after their own lusts they will heap unto themselves teachers, who will turn away their ears from the truth, and they will be turned unto fables"—that they "will have a form of godliness but *deny the power*;" and our Saviour says, that "they will cast you out of their synagogues; and the time will come, when he that killeth you will think he doeth God service." The first regular Baptist Church have fulfilled the first part of this; and some of the orthodox in Missouri, the second; so that brother Wm. Seichrist need not be disappointed. The thing is spoken of by the prophets; and deacon Beck, and deacon Benson; and the board at which he was tried, have acted in the spirit of their calling—have excommunicated him for heresies that were considered dangerous, in every age, by the same church; that the church have acted upon true orthodox principles; and that he has been dealt with as Peter, John, and Paul, and as all other heretics have been dealt with, by the first regular Baptist Church in all ages.

REVELATION.

I have sworn in my wrath and decreed wars upon the face of the earth, and the wicked shall slay the wicked, and fear shall come upon every man, and the Saints also shall hardly escape; nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father, and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire. * * * I will that my Saints should be assembled upon the land of Zion; and that every man should take righteousness in his hands, and faithfulness upon his loins, and lift a warning voice unto the inhabitants of the earth; and declare both by word and flight, that desolation shall come upon the wicked.—*Book of Doctrine and Covenants.*

LETTER FROM PRÉSIDENT JOSEPH SMITH.

To the Editor of the Times and Seasons.

Mr. Editor, Sir,—Ever since I gave up the editorial department of the *Times and Seasons*, I have thought of writing a piece for publication by way of valedictory, as is usual when editors resign the chair editorial. My principal remarks I intended to apply to the gentlemen of the quill, or, if you please, that numerous body of respectable gentlemen who profess to regulate the tone of the public mind, in regard to politics, morality, religion, literature, the arts and sciences, &c., &c., viz. the editors of the public journals; or, if you please, I will designate them the lions of the forest. This latter cognomen, sir, I consider to be more appropriate, because of the dignity of their office, their lofty bearing and mein, their ascendancy and influence over all others, and because of the tremendous noise that they make when they utter their voice.

It came to pass, that as I went forth like a young fawn one day, to feed upon the green grass in my pasture, an ass saw me, and brayed and made a great noise, which a neighbouring lion hearing, roared, even as a lion roareth when he beholds his prey. At the sound of his voice the beasts of the field were alarmed, and the lions in the adjoining jungles pricked their ears and roared in their turn. And, behold, all the lions in the forest, alarmed by the noise, opened their mouths and uttered forth their voices, which was as the roaring of a cataract, or as the voice of thunder; so tremendous was their roaring, that the trees of the forest shook as if they were shaken by a mighty wind, and all the beasts of the forest trembled as if a whirlwind were passing. I lifted up mine eyes with astonishment when I heard the voice of the lions and saw the fury of their rage. I asked, is it possible that so many lords of the forest, such noble beasts, should condescend to notice one solitary fawn that is feeding alone upon his pasture, without attempting to excite either their jealousy or their anger? I have not strayed from the fold, nor injured the trees of the forest, nor hurt the beasts of the field, nor trampled upon their pasture, nor drunk of their streams; why, then, their rage against me? When lo! and, behold! they again uttered their voices, as the voice of great thundering, and there was given unto them the voice of men; but it was difficult for me to distinguish what was said among so many voices, but ever and anon I heard a few broken, incoherent sentences like the following:—Murder! Desolation!! Bloodshed!!! Arson!!! Treason!!! Joe Smith and the Mormons!!! Our nation will be overturned!!! The impostor should be driven from the State!!! The fawn will be metamorphosed into a lion, will devour all the beasts of the field, destroy all the trees of the forest, and tread underfoot all the rest of the lions. I then lifted up my voice and

said, hear me, ye beasts of the forest, and all ye great lions pay attention! I am innocent of the things whereof ye accuse me. I have not been guilty of violating your laws, nor of trespassing upon your rights. My hands are clean from the blood of all men, and I am at the defiance of all the world to substantiate the crimes whereof I am accused; wherefore, then, should animals of your noble mein stoop to such little jealousies, such vulgar language, and lay such unfounded charges at the door of the innocent?

It is true that I once suffered an ass to feed in my pasture: he ate at my crib and drank at my waters; but possessing the true nature of an ass, he began to foul the water with his feet, and to trample under foot the green grass and destroy it. I therefore put him out of my pasture and he began to bray. Many of the lions in the adjoining jungles mistaking his braying for the roaring of a lion, commenced roaring. When I proclaimed this abroad, many of the lions began to enquire into the matter; a few possessing a more noble nature than many of their fellows, drew near, and viewing the animal found that he was nothing more than a decrepit, broken-down, worn-out ass, that had scarcely anything left but his ears and his voice. Whereupon many of the lions felt indignant at the lion of Warsaw, the lion of Quincy, the lion of Sangamo, the lion of Alton, and several other lions, for giving a false alarm, for dishonouring their race, and for responding to the voice of so base an animal as an ass. And they felt ashamed of themselves for being decoyed into such ribaldry, and foul-mouthed slander. But there were many that lost sight of their dignity, and continued to roar, although they knew full well that they were following the braying of so despicable a creature. Among these was a great lion, whose den was on the borders of the eastern sea; he had waxed great in strength; he had terrible teeth, and his eyes were like balls of

fire; his head was large and terrific, and his shaggy mane rolled with majestic grandeur over his terrible neck; his claws were like the claws of the dragon; and his ribs were like those of the leviathan; when he lifted himself up all the beasts of the field bowed with respectful deference; and when he spake the whole universe listened, and the cinders of his power cover creation. His might, his influence were felt to the ends of the earth; when he lashed his tail, the beasts of the forest trembled; and when he roared all the great lions and the young lions crouched down at his feet.

This great lion, lifting up himself and beholding the fawn afar off, opened his mouth, and joining in the common roar, uttered the following great swelling yelp:—

"JOE SMITH IN TROUBLE.—By a letter which we published on Sunday, from Springfield, Illinois, it appears that Joe Smith, the great Mormon Prophet, has at last given himself up to the authorities of Illinois. He is charged with fomenting or conspiring to assassinate Governor Boggs, of Missouri, and is demanded by the functionary of that state, of the Governor of Illinois. Joe has taken out a writ of *habeas corpus*, denying the fact, and is now waiting the decision of the court at Springfield. This will bring Joe's troubles to a crisis.—In the meantime, why does not Joe try his power at working a miracle or two? Now's the time to prove his mission, besides being very convenient for himself."

When I heard it, I said poor fellow! How has thy dignity fallen! and how has thy glory departed! Thou that once ranked amongst the foremost of the beasts of the field, as the lord of the forest! Even thou hast condescended to degrade thyself by uniting with the basest of animals, and to join in with the braying of an ass.

And now, friend B., allow me to whisper a word in thine ear. Dost thou not know that there is a God in the heavens that judgeth? that setteth up one and putteth down another according to the counsel of his own will? That if thou possessest any influence, wisdom, dominion, or power, it comes from God, and to him thou art indebted for it? That he holds the destinies of men in his power, and can as easily put down as he has raised up? Tell me, when hast

thou treated a subject of religious and eternal truth with that seriousness and candour that the importance of the subject demands from a man in thy standing, possessing thy calling and influence? As thou seemest to be quite a theologian, allow me to ask a few plain questions. Why did not God deliver Micaiah from the hands of his persecutors? Why did not Jeremiah "work a miracle or two," to help him out of the dungeon? It would have been "very convenient." Why did not Zechariah, by a miracle, prevent the people from slaying him? Why did not our Saviour come down from the cross? The people asked him to do it; and, besides, he had saved others and could not save himself—so said the people. Why did he not prove his mission by working a miracle and coming down? Why did not Paul, by a miracle, prevent the people from stoning and whipping him? It would have been "very convenient." Or why did the saints of God, in every age, have to wander about in sheep skins and goat skins? being tempted, tried, and sawn asunder—of whom the world was not worthy. I would here advise my worthy friend, before he talks of "proving missions, working miracles, or any convenience" of that kind, to read his bible a little more, and the garbled stories of political demagogues a little less.

I listened, and lo, I heard a voice, and it was the voice of my shepherd, saying, Listen all ye lions of the forest, and all the beasts of the field give ear; ye have sought to injure the innocent; and your hands have been lifted against the weak, the injured, and the oppressed. Ye have pampered the libertine, the calumniator, and the base. Ye have winked at vice, and trodden under foot the virtuous and the pure; therefore, hear all ye lions of the forest. The Lord will take from you your teeth, so that you shall no longer devour. He will pluck out your claws, so that you can no longer seize upon your prey. Your strength will fail you in the day of trouble, and your voice will fail, and not be heard afar off; but mine elect will I uphold with mine arm, and my chosen shall be supported by my power. And when mine anointed shall be exalted, and all the lions of the forest shall have lost their strength, then shall they remember that the Lord he is God.

JOSEPH SMITH.

"MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS."

Mormon Creed.

We think the practice of the above worthy of recommendation to many who are not over scrupulous in their statements respecting the character and Religion of the Saints; also worth the notice of those Saints who forget the gospel by attacking the systems of men.

LETTER FROM JOHN GREENHOW, LATE OF LIVERPOOL.

To the Editor of the Times and Seasons.

Dear Brother Taylor,—I send you a few lines, thinking that you might wish to hear some particulars of your old friends on the other side of the Atlantic, and the progress of the work of God throughout England. But, in the first place, allow me to express my joy at again seeing the servants of God, whom I had so often listened to with joy, while they laid open to me the principles of eternal truth, which the Lord has again revealed for the salvation of man. And next my perfect satisfaction with Nauvoo, as far as I can judge after a fortnight's residence. It is altogether needless for me to make any allusions to Joseph Smith, for I had not been long in the church before I KNEW that he was a prophet of God, and had received the holy priesthood by dreams, by VISIONS, by healings, and, in fact, by the signs following, which has caused me to rejoice in having an existence in this momentous age.

It is now nearly three years since I first saw you, and I came armed with all my Wesleyan zeal to drive these Philistines from our coast; but when you commenced laying the truth before us, I felt like Samson deprived of his locks—my strength was gone, and but one desire filled my soul—that what you were stating might be true; and I did not leave the house till I had the promise of a servant of God to pray for me, that, if it was the truth, the Lord would make it manifest to me, which he shortly after did by an *open vision*. I have no doubt but you still remember our first interview, and how the work spread while you remained in England. It is rapidly spreading over all the face of that island; and very soon there will scarcely be a village or hamlet where the gospel is not planted for the honest in heart to flock unto. In Liverpool the work has been going on steadily, since the time you left, and the hearers both numerous and respectable. At the time you left, I believe the Liverpool conference numbered about two hundred and fifty; and when I left, in September last, over seven hundred. We have had peace and good order throughout, and have had but seldom indeed to resort to the expedient of cut-

ting off. In the last twelve weeks of my presidency over the Liverpool conference we baptized ninety-eight.

On the 17th of September we left Liverpool in the ship *Sydney*, and set our faces towards Zion, and after a passage of eight weeks we landed at New Orleans. There were six deaths during the voyage, viz. four children, one sailor, who fell from the yard-arm, and sister Cannon. She had been unwell for some time previous to our leaving Liverpool, and continued getting worse. She died without a struggle or a murmur, and was perfectly reconciled. She requested to be buried in the sea, if she died previous to reaching New Orleans, but if coming up the river, that she might be buried on land. Captain Cowan is one of the most kind-hearted humane men that ever crossed the Atlantic. After tarrying three days at New Orleans we again embarked on board the *Alex. Scott*, and made rapid progress till we passed the mouth of the Ohio, when we soon after ran a-ground and remained there three days; on our deliverance we got to within ninety miles of St. Louis, where she had to remain three weeks for want of water. When we arrived at St. Louis we had to look out for houses, as it was at this time about the depth of winter, and the river was frozen up above St. Louis; yet *all* got houses to shelter in, and provisions in abundance. We had honey at two cents a pound, beef from seven to ten pounds for five cents, and the finest geese in the market at fifteen cents each, butter five cents a pound, and everything in the same proportion. The brethren were mainly well when I left St. Louis, and anxiously waiting for a general break up of the river that they might make another start for Nauvoo. I believe, sir, that the abominable lies, which are in circulation, over the whole land, would turn any man but a Latter-day Saint, and we *know* we have not followed cunningly devised fables, and therefore are not to be carried away with the cunning craft of men whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But I must now conclude at present, for I had neither pen, ink, or paper when I begun this

letter, so just took my stick to give you the news in the best way I could. And I thank God that, after a journey of more than nineteen weeks, I am safe in Nauvoo, and feel myself out of the

reach of oppression, and my mind in perfect peace.

I remain your affectionate brother, in the covenant of peace,

JOHN GREENHOW.

Editorial.

We have been led to make a few remarks on the great LAW OF ADOPTION as one of the greatest importance, and one to which we would wish to direct the attention of the priesthood generally in their labours.

We have received *Times and Seasons* from Nauvoo lately, giving the minutes of several conferences held in different places, and we rejoice to find the teachings given on those occasions to correspond with what we have laboured to enforce through the columns of the STAR; that is, a strict adherence to the first principles of the gospel in our public administrations, remembering always that before an individual is prepared to receive the mysteries of the kingdom of God, it is necessary he should change his position in relation to God; and instead of being in the flesh, a stranger and an alien, that he became a son, having received the spirit of adoption whereby he can cry, Abba Father. We are aware that it will require some degree of humility to continue faithful in this plan of teaching, and Satan will often suggest that we shall weary the people by the monotony of the subject; or, perhaps, with greater artfulness still, tell us that we shall sink much in public estimation, unless we bring forth a variety of subjects calculated to strike the audience with astonishment, and convince them of the fertility of our understandings. But let us heed not these temptations, nor listen to them, but trusting in the Lord, in our proclamations of divine truth, we shall be enabled to bring forth things both new and old, and we shall find that we shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the work of the Lord.

In the present number of the STAR we have given a portion of a letter of elder Orson Spencer's, which will be concluded in our next, the importance and interesting character of which will be obvious to every reader.

The pointed remarks on the charge of Heresy are very justly dealt out, and certainly the satisfaction of the Saint, while reading them, must be great to find that while he would stand excommunicated from the First Regular Baptist Church of the city of Alleghany, he will still be found classified with the great and good of past ages of whom the world was not worthy.

The allegorical letter of our beloved President, Joseph Smith, is very applicable in its meaning, to the multifarious scribbling gentlemen of the press, many of whom assume a ludicrously high position, and with whose effusions we have been often much amused; for many is the time that we have seen, as it were, the editors of certain papers, who have come out most majestically against the Saints, fling down their pens in apparently perfect satisfaction, having concluded their epistle with the declaration that they had effectually put down Mormonism. We hope that friend B, on the eastern sea, will take to himself that which fits him, and become wiser for the future.